BattleTech
Instant Action

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

BattleTech: Instant Action is a supplement for BattleTech intended to promote pickup games, making it easier to set up and play a game of BattleTech with a friend or even a stranger.

> ***Note:*** This is not a complete game experience. A copy of the BattleTech rules is required to use this supplement – either *Total Warfare* or the *BattleMech Manual*.

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How to Use This Supplement

The core feature of this supplement is the **Mission Matrix**. The concept is simple. Each player privately chooses an agenda – these are *Confront*, *Hold*, *Recon*, *Destroy*, and *Salvage*. Then the players reveal their choice of agenda and check the matrix chart to determine which mission is being played. Each mission is a scenario with setup and victory conditions. Five of the scenarios are "symmetrical," resulting when both players pick the same agenda, while the others are asymmetrical.

In the asymmetrical scenarios, players will have distinct roles and objectives, with each having a different victory condition.

Tip: When choosing agendas, you can simply cover a die with your hand, using the numbers on the table to determine which agenda you're representing. You could even randomly roll to determine an agenda if you want a surprise challenge. If so, reroll a 6.

Mission Matrix

	CONFRONT	HOLD	RECON	DESTROY	SALVAGE
CONFRONT	Circle of Equals *Pg. 6*	Ambush *Pg. 7*	Running Retreat *Pg. 8*	Death Before Dishonor *Pg. 9*	Take Intact *Pg. 10*
HOLD	Ambush *Pg.7*	King of the Hill *Pg. 11*	Investigate & Withdraw *Pg. 12*	Bombing Run *Pg. 13*	Convoy *Pg. 14*
RECON	Running Retreat *Pg. 8*	Investigate & Withdraw *Pg. 12*	Scout Clash *Pg. 15*	High Risk Extraction *Pg. 16*	Scan or Recover *Pg. 17*
DESTROY	Death Before Dishonor *Pg.9*	Bombing Run *Pg. 13*	High Risk Extraction *Pg. 16*	Hot Potato *Pg. 18*	Under No Circumstances *Pg. 19*
SALVAGE	Take Intact *Pg. 10*	Convoy *Pg. 14*	Scan or Recover *Pg. 17*	Under No Circumstances *Pg. 19*	Get the Goods *Pg. 20*

Agendas

The five Agendas are intended to reflect your force's goal in the strategy surrounding the battle – you're picking the reason you're fighting, rather than picking your objective.

CONFRONT

Whether you're forcing the enemy off of territory or trying to whittle them down, *Confront* is about engaging them directly. You might not simply be walking up to them – you could be laying in ambush, targeting a specific enemy commander, or trying to capture a valuable installation – but Confront is about facing the enemy head on.

HOLD

Hold is about keeping what you have and breaking the enemy while you do it, involving strategic choke points, important facilities, or valuable technology. You may or may not be playing static defense, but you'll at least be on the defensive, letting the enemy come to you.

RECON

Information is a weapon as deadly as any laser. Recon missions take advantage of that – battlefield searches to identify a target, planting a beacon to summon heavy artillery fire, or lightning strikes to capture an identified objective. Electronic gear such as active probes, TAGs, and NARC beacon launchers will come into their own in some Recon missions.

DESTROY

Keep it out of their hands at all costs. Destroy is focused on objective play, with an emphasis on objectives that you *don't* want to keep. Delivering bombs to a location, crushing other objectives underfoot, and otherwise wreaking havoc. Bring 'Mechs with heavy armor for reaching your destination, and hand actuators to carry hazardous cargo.

SALVAGE

We're here for the paycheck, people, not the politics. Salvage is critical on the battlefield, whether it's capturing parts of enemy 'Mechs to keep your own running or securing work sites for salvage crews. You can expect to be out to secure valuables – whether by searching for them, taking them off the enemy, or holding them against a push from hostiles. Bring 'Mechs with hand actuators – you'll want them.

Building A Force

The missions present in *Instant Action* are designed around small engagements of one lance of 'Mechs against another. While you may want to adjust these values based on era and whether you want to involve Battle Armor, the Clans, or other unit types, it's recommended that each player bring a force of four 'Mechs, totaling 6000 Battle Value (BV) during the 3050s.

In addition, several missions will grant one side offsite support in the form of Battlefield Support Points (BSPs), providing them with extra firepower in the form of artillery fire, airstrikes, and minefields. The full rules on BSPs can be found in the *BattleMech Manual*.

The Forced Withdrawal and Hidden 'Mech rules, also found in the *BattleMech Manual* (pages 81 and 82, respectively), will also be used for some missions.

Battlefield Setup

All of *Instant Action's* missions are built around a battlefield consisting of two mapsheets, placed long-edge to long-edge to produce a 32 × 17 hex playing area. This is also the form factor of the current double-sided neoprene BattleMats, making one of these a suitable battlefield for *Instant Action*. Any pair of mapsheets or single BattleMat should be suitable for any scenario.

Objectives

More often than not, you'll find yourself fighting over some valuable, crucial object, rather than simply destroying the enemy. These are referred to as **Objectives**, and while they can be everything from crates of Germanium to 'Mech-size satchel charges, they'll be represented with the same rules. 'Mechs with two functional hand actuators may carry one objective without any issue – carrying such an objective doesn't interfere with firing weapons mounted in its arms, as it can pass the objective from one hand to the other. Alternately, a 'Mech with two functional hand actuators may carry two objectives but may not fire any arm-mounted weapons while doing so. If a 'Mech has one functioning hand actuator, it may carry an objective, but may not fire any weapons located in that arm. If a 'Mech has no functioning hand actuators, the objective is magnetically-clamped to it, straining the gyro. A 'Mech carrying an objective without any functioning hand actuators suffers a −1 movement point (MP) penalty.

'Mechs which end their movement phase in the same hex as an objective can pick it up immediately. If a 'Mech carrying an objective falls, it drops the objective in the hex in front of it. Objectives never suffer damage and can't be destroyed unless specified by the mission brief.

CIRCLE OF EQUALS

[CONFRONT VS CONFRONT]

"Attention! this is Star Colonel Aisa Thastus of the Jade Falcons. I claim these islands in the name of Khan Marthe Pryde. I bring to this Trial of Possession a full Binary of 'Mechs."

"This is Spectre One, commander. I refute your claim to this territory. I bring two Lances of warriors to end this struggle."

"Two Lances against two Stars of Jade Falcons? You underestimate us!"

"Do you wish to rebid your positions, Star Colonel?"

"Neg! You will suffer for your insolence!"

"Well bargained and done. Come and get me!"

MISSION BRIEF

This is the simplest mission in *Instant Action*, a normal stand-up fight. Both sides use the Forced Withdrawal rules.

VICTORY

The last player to have active 'Mechs on the field and not in Forced Withdrawal wins.

AMBUSH

[CONFRONT VS HOLD]

"Let them cross the river. Once they do, push them back, hard as you can. Shock and awe will do the real work. They still don't know we're here. Final checks, everyone. Boot up, and let's bag some kills."

MISSION BRIEF

First, the Confront player places their 'Mechs. All their 'Mechs must be placed within three hexes of the center of the map and may face in any direction. Then, the Hold player places all their 'Mechs at least four hexes from any of the Confront player's 'Mechs, using the Hidden 'Mech rules. The Confront player used the Forced Withdrawal rules in this scenario.

VICTORY

The scenario ends at the end of turn 8. If the Confront player has at least half of their force (rounding up) destroyed or withdrawing, the Hold player is the winner. Otherwise, the Confront player is the winner.

RUNNING RETREAT

[CONFRONT VS RECON]

"Hey, Lieutenant? I'm seeing something on the sensors, got a weird ping on the radar, and – CONTACT! Fusion engine startup, woah, those are big signatures. We need to get out of here no – CONTACT! Another engine, starting up behind it! We need to push through!"

MISSION BRIEF

First, the Confront player chooses half of their 'Mechs (round down) to set up in concealed positions somewhere on the map using the Hidden 'Mech rules. The Recon player then chooses one short map edge to be their Escape Zone. The other Confront 'Mechs will move onto the battlefield normally at the beginning of the first turn, arriving from the Escape Zone. The Recon player's 'Mechs will move onto the battlefield from the short map edge opposite the Escape Zone.

VICTORY

Starting in turn 8, the Recon player's 'Mechs may move off the map via their Escape Zone. The game ends when all Recon 'Mechs have either left the map or been destroyed or immobilized. The Confront player wins if they have destroyed or immobilized half or more of the Recon force, while the Recon player wins if more than half of their 'Mechs have moved off the board edge.

DEATH BEFORE DISHONOR

[CONFRONT VS DESTROY]

"I'd rather see our standard tattered or burned than in the hands of a pirate. Move to intercept. I don't care how many of them you have to kill. I don't care how many of you come back alive. Do not let them get away with our colors. This is for the honor of the flag."

MISSION BRIEF

The Confront player has captured some crucial component of the Destroy player's honor – a copy of the Remembrance, a regimental standard, or an important aristocratic pilot. The Confront player's objective is to escape the battlefield with this item, while the Destroy player's goal is to destroy the objective to keep it out of enemy hands.

The Confront player secretly chooses one of their 'Mechs to begin the game carrying an objective, then chooses one short map edge to be their end zone. Their goal is to deliver the objective to their end zone. They set up their 'Mechs within 10 hexes of the opposite map edge – they have to cover most of the map to escape with the objective.

After the Confront player has set up their 'Mechs, the Destroy player places half their units within three hexes of the map edge opposite the end zone – this is the Destroy player's map edge. The other half of their units move on from one of the long table edges during the first turn, moving onto the map starting in a hex no more than halfway to the end zone. After these units move onto the board, the Confront player must reveal which of their units is holding the objective.

VICTORY

The Confront player wins if a unit carries the objective to the end zone and then moves off it successfully.

The Destroy player wins by destroying the objective. To do so, one of their 'Mechs must pick up the objective and then not move in the following turn as they crush it into wreckage.

If the objective is still on the battlefield at the end of turn 8, the game is a draw.

TAKE INTACT

[CONFRONT VS SALVAGE]

"Will you look at the specs on that bad boy. Everyone see them? That armor, those lasers…you know, I've been feeling the urge for a new ride. Not a scratch on it, everyone. Kill the rest, but we're taking this one home."

MISSION BRIEF

The Confront player chooses one of their 'Mechs to be the Prize. Make this decision based on lore – the Prize should be the most technologically advanced or best equipped of the Confront player's 'Mechs, the one piloted by the commander, or a similar reason for the enemy to want to capture it specifically. The Salvage player is trying to capture the Prize intact, and they may not make attacks that target the Prize directly, though it can be damaged for other reasons. The Salvage player also uses the Forced Withdrawal rules.

VICTORY

The Confront player wins if all the Salvage player's 'Mechs are either destroyed, have retreated, or are in Forced Withdrawal. The Salvage player wins if they have destroyed every enemy 'Mech except the Prize. In that case, the Prize surrenders.

KING OF THE HILL

[HOLD VS HOLD]

"Key terrain, my ass. The commander and his social general pals just want to have a picnic overlooking the valley, and the enemy happens to be obstructing the view."

MISSION BRIEF

Players roll off and the winner chooses a long map edge to be their home edge. The loser chooses the other map edge. Identify the central hex of the map – that hex is the control zone. Both players use the Forced Withdrawal rules. However, 'Mechs starting their movement in or adjacent to the Control Zone never withdraw.

At the end of each turn, you gain 1 victory point (VP) for each 'Mech standing in a hex adjacent to the control zone, and 2 VP for a 'Mech standing in the control zone itself.

VICTORY

The game ends at the end of turn 10, or when all 'Mechs have been destroyed or are retreating, whichever comes first. The player with the most VP is the winner.

INVESTIGATE & WITHDRAW

[HOLD VS RECON]

"Alright, they're on our left, they're on our right, they're in front of us, they're behind us…they can't get away this time."

MISSION BRIEF

First, the Hold player chooses one of the short board edges and sets up their 'Mechs within eight hexes of it, using the Hidden Unit rules. The Recon player's 'Mechs will move onto the board from the opposite board edge. The Recon player's objective is to Identify the hold player's 'Mechs, taking a recording of their sensor signature so that electronic warfare (EW) programmers can adapt to the enemy's new updates, and to that end some of their usual electronics gear is operating in a "data gathering" mode. The Recon player identifies an enemy 'Mech by doing any of the following.

- Destroy a 'Mech
- Have a 'Mech end two consecutive turns within two hexes of the same enemy 'Mech.
- Have a 'Mech equipped with a functioning Active Probe end two consecutive turns within range of the same enemy 'Mech.
- Hit the same enemy 'Mech with a TAG three times.
- Hit the same enemy 'Mech with a NARC twice.
- Sever a 'Mech's limb, such as an arm or leg, and then pick it up as a club.

For a 'Mech to count as identified, the friendly 'Mech that collected its signature must then retreat from the battle by moving off any board edge. A recon 'Mech can identify multiple Hold 'Mechs, and a Hold 'Mech can be identified multiple times.

VICTORY

The Hold player wins if they destroy more Recon 'Mechs than the Recon player identified. Note that collecting multiple copies of the same 'Mech's signature does not help – the recon player needs distinct profiles on multiple 'Mechs in order to beat the enemy EW.

BOMBING RUN

[HOLD VS DESTROY]

"You take a standard shipping container, cram it with as much Class E ordnance as it can hold, rig up a simple fuse, then coat the whole thing with grease. Now when a 'Mech throws it, it should stick, hence, 'sticky bomb.' Think of a better way to knock the engines off a dropship, I'm all ears."

MISSION BRIEF

First, the Hold player chooses which of the long board edges they will be tasked with defending and sets up their 'Mechs within four hexes of their map edge, while the Destroyer player's 'Mechs will walk onto the board on the opposite edge. Each of the Destroy player's Mechs starts with an objective. The objectives are massive bombs, 'Mech-scale satchel charges, and the Destroy player's objective is to deliver at least two satchel charges to the Hold player's board edge.

The satchel charges are shock sensitive – they cannot be moved more than four hexes in a single round without a chance of detonating prematurely. If a 'Mech carrying a satchel charge jumps, falls, or moves more than four hexes in a single phase, roll 2d6 at the end of its movement or after the fall, adding +1 for each hex moved beyond the fourth and an additional +1 if the 'Mech jumped; the charge detonates on a 10+. If the 'Mech fell as part of a skid, it drops the charge before continuing to skid, but the charge detonates after the skid has been resolved. Remember that when a 'Mech carrying an objective falls, the objective falls into the hex in front of it, rather than the same hex.

A satchel charge detonation inflicts 200 damage on the hex it's in and 20 damage on adjacent hexes, including the hex of the 'Mech that just dropped it. This damage is area effect (AE) damage and is applied in 5-point clusters. In addition, a 'Mech currently holding a satchel charge may choose at any point to detonate it – almost certainly destroying the 'Mech, but possibly paving the way for their allies to punch through.

When a 'Mech carrying a satchel charge reaches the enemy board edge, they may plant their satchel charge, dropping it just off the edge of the board and then participating in the rest of the battle. The satchel charge may not be interfered with further.

VICTORY

All satchel charges detonate immediately at the end of turn 6. If the Destroy player has delivered at least two satchel charges to the Hold player's board edge, they win, while the Hold player wins if they have delivered one or less.

CONVOY

[HOLD VS SALVAGE]

"Breaker one-nine, this here's Purple Bird. You got a copy on me, Love Machine?"

"Ten-four, Purple Bird. For sure, for sure, by golly it's clean clear to Taurian Town."

"Yeah we definitely got us the front door, good buddy. Mercy's sakes alive, looks like we got us a convoy!"

MISSION BRIEF

The Hold player begins by choosing a short map edge as their edge – the Salvage player takes the opposite edge. The Hold player then chooses three non-water hexes that are each exactly six full hexes from their map edge to be the wreckage. The Salvage player, along with their 'Mechs, has four recovery vehicles. these recovery Vehicles do not have record sheets and cannot be the target of attacks. They are tracked vehicles with a movement profile of 4 / 6 and a pilot skill of 5. The recovery vehicles will only move forward if they are within three hexes of a friendly 'Mech when they begin their movement – otherwise they will begin falling back towards the Salvage player's table edge in the same manner as if they were in forced withdrawal. If the recovery vehicles are within three hexes of at least as many enemy 'Mechs as friendly, they will hold still, waiting for friendly 'Mechs to clear the way. If a recovery vehicle withdraws off the board edge, it cannot return. Once a recovery vehicle reaches a wreckage hex, the crew begins digging in to hold the wreckage – the vehicle will not move for the rest of the game.

VICTORY

The game ends when all recovery vehicles are either forced to withdraw off the board or have reached wreckage hexes. If at least two different wreckage hexes have recovery vehicles on them, the Salvage player wins. Otherwise, the Hold player wins.

> **Note:** If both players agree, this scenario can be played with fully detailed support vehicles with record sheets that can be the target of attacks. If you do so, you may wish to give the Salvage player additional recovery vehicles, as being able to destroy them vastly changes the balance of the scenario. The *Savior Repair Vehicle* is a good choice.

SCOUT CLASH

[RECON VS RECON]

"I don't care who you are, back in the world. You give away our position one more time, I'll bleed you. Real quiet like. Leave you here. Got that?"

MISSION BRIEF

The players roll off and the winner chooses a short map edge to be their edge, the loser takes the opposite edge. Place a data node at the center of the map. Then, starting with the player who lost the roll off to choose sides, players take turns placing six data nodes in other hexes. Each data node must be at least three hexes away from any other data node and at least five hexes from any map edge but can otherwise be placed in any hex.

Both players will move 'Mechs onto the board from their own edge during the first turn.

The objective in this scenario is to scan as many data nodes as possible. To scan a data node, you must do one of the following:

- Have a 'Mech end its movement in the same hex as the data node and not make any attacks for the rest of the turn.
- Have a 'Mech equipped with an Active Probe spend two consecutive turns in active probe range of the data node
- Have a 'Mech successfully paint the data node with a TAG twice.
- Have a 'Mech hit the data node with any form of NARC beacon

VICTORY

Once a data node has been scanned, the data for that node is saved to that 'Mech's computer. If that 'Mech successfully retreats off the board, you gain one victory point for each unique data node that 'Mech scanned. Each data node can only contribute one victory point to you, as multiple copies of the same data aren't necessary. The game ends at the end of turn 8, or when all 'Mechs have been destroyed or rendered unable to retreat off the board, whichever comes first. The player who has collected the most victory points is the winner.

HIGH RISK EXTRACTION

[RECON VS DESTROY]

"Sir, you know as well as I do what's going to happen to them if we leave them out here. There's not going to be a trial, there's not going to be a jury. They're going to take them outside the courthouse and put one round each in the backs of their heads."

MISSION BRIEF

The Destroy player begins by secretly writing down the numbers of six hexes which contain the Agents – these must be at least three hexes from any map edge and any other agents, may not be Water hexes, and may not have an elevation higher than level 3. After doing so, the Recon player chooses any one map edge to be their home edge, while the Destroy player takes the opposite edge.

VICTORY

The Recon player's goal in this scenario is to locate and extract the agents. Agents are located in the exact same manner as units hidden via the Hidden Unit rules. To represent the Agents' emergency beacons making them easier to rescue, each Recon 'Mech is equipped with a three-hex range Active Probe. The Destroy player is responsible for keeping track of and revealing the Agents' location when the Recon player locates one. The Destroy player, who knows where the Agents are, has the goal of killing them. The agents' exact locations are hidden enough that simple weapons fire isn't guaranteed to hit them – an Agent is killed when a Destroy player's 'Mech begins a movement phase in the Agent's hex.

Once the Recon player has located an Agent, it is treated as an objective in all respects. The game ends when the Recon player has located three Agents and carried them to any map edge, or when the Destroy player has killed four agents, whichever comes first. If the Recon player rescues three agents, they win, while the Destroy player wins if they kill four.

> **Note:** If you are playing on a mat which doesn't include numbered hexes, the Destroy player should write down an unambiguous description of exactly which hex each Agent is in.

SCAN OR RECOVER

[RECON VS SALVAGE]

"One man's trash is another man's treasure is a third man's raw materials for their planet-buster earthquake machine."

MISSION BRIEF

Begin by placing one objective in the center of the map. Then, place two more objectives, equidistant between the center objective and the short map edges. The Salvage player then chooses one of the long map edges to be their map edge, and the Recon player takes the opposite map edge as theirs. Both players' units will move onto the map in the first movement phase.

VICTORY

The Salvage player's objective in this scenario is to carry two of the three objectives off their map edge. Once a 'Mech has left the map carrying an objective, it may not return.

The Recon player's objective is to successfully Scan all three objectives. In order to Scan an objective, the Recon player must do one of the following:

- Have a 'Mech start a turn in the same hex as an objective and end the same turn there.
- Have a 'Mech equipped with an Active Probe start a turn in Active Probe range of the objective, end the turn in range, and then do the same thing in the next round.
- Hit an objective three times with a TAG
- Hit an objective twice with a NARC launcher.

Note: The Recon player may not scan an objective while it is being carried by a Salvage 'Mech.

The scenario ends when the Salvage player has carried two objectives off their map edge, or the Recon player has scanned all three objectives, whichever comes first. The player that accomplishes their objective is the winner.

HOT POTATO

[DESTROY VS DESTROY]

"TICK, TICK, TICK, TICK, TICK…"

MISSION BRIEF

Place an objective in the center of the map. Then players roll off. Starting with the winner, players take turns deploying all their 'Mechs. Each 'Mech must be within six hexes of the center of the map and at least three hexes from any enemy 'Mech.

Mechs may not deliberately set the objective down in this scenario. However, if a 'Mech hits a target with a successful Charge or Punch attack, the objective is transferred to the target. It may not transfer again in the same attack step. Once the objective has been transferred to another target, the timer activates.

If the objective's timer is active, at the end of each turn, roll 1d6. On a 6, the objective detonates, inflicting 200 AE damage to its hex and 20 AE damage to each adjacent hex. After the objective detonates, place a new objective in the center of the map.

VICTORY

Every time an enemy 'Mech is destroyed, you gain 1 VP. You gain 3 VP if that 'Mech was destroyed by a detonating objective. Once all 'Mechs have been destroyed, the player with the most VP is the winner.

UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES

[DESTROY VS SALVAGE]

"Anybody can get the goods. The hard part's getting away."

"Uh-huh."

"You plan a good enough getaway, you could steal Fort Cameron."

"Fort Cameron's gone."

"What did I tell you?"

MISSION BRIEF

The Salvage player begins by picking one short map edge to be their Escape edge. The opposite edge is the Starting edge. The Salvage player then sets their 'Mechs up within four hexes of the Starting edge – their 'Mechs have to cross the map to the Escape edge. All their 'Mechs start the game carrying objectives. The Destroy player's 'Mechs will move onto the board from the Starting edge – this represents the Destroy player's 'Mechs having caught up to the Salvage player after a long chase.

VICTORY

To win, the Salvage player must deliver half their objectives, rounding up, to their Escape edge. To do so, a 'Mech must walk off the map carrying an objective and may not return afterward. The Destroy player's goal is to destroy the objectives to keep them out of enemy hands. To destroy an objective, one of the Destroy player's 'Mechs must spend an entire turn standing still on an objective, crushing it into shrapnel to keep it out of enemy hands. The game ends at the end of turn 7. If the Salvage player's 'Mechs have delivered at least half their objectives to the escape edge, the Salvage player wins. Otherwise, the Destroy player wins.

GET THE GOODS

[SALVAGE VS SALVAGE]

"Alright everyone, we're low on parts. Command says they'll pay big money for any spare parts we can grab. And I know just the place to grab them. See that nice, shiny lance of enemy 'Mechs across the field? That's our payday."

MISSION BRIEF

Begin by setting up one objective in the center of the board(or as close as possible if the center is unsuitable in some way). Players roll off and the winner chooses a long map edge to be their side, while their opponent chooses the opposite. Both players use forced withdrawal rules.

Each time a 'Mech's limb is destroyed, place a marker in the hex it happened in to indicate the club-limb left behind. Each time a non-limb section of a 'Mech is destroyed, place an objective in the hex it happened in. Mechs carrying objectives may leave the map via their owner's map edge during movement and, provided they aren't in forced withdrawal, return via the same hex they left through during the movement step of the next turn.

VICTORY

After the last 'Mech has been destroyed or put into forced withdrawal, the player who collected the most objectives and clubs is the winner.